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Let's Talk Broadband

Welcome to the spring issue of *Let's Talk Broadband*, featuring an update on the **Internet For All Now Act (AB 1665)** and news on two **CETF Policy Forums** and the **2017 School2Home Leadership Academy**. This issue also includes interviews with **Assemblymember Kevin McCarty** and **California Educators Lisa Richardson** and **Leo Gonzalez** on the importance of broadband for economic development and education. *Let's Talk Broadband* is published by the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF), a statewide non-profit founded as a public benefit from mergers in 2005 with the mission to close the Digital Divide.

Sincerely,

Sunne Wright McPeak, President and CEO
California Emerging Technology Fund

Internet For All Now Act Introduced

The Internet For All Now Act (AB 1665) was introduced in the California State Legislature on February 17, 2017 by Assemblymember **Eduardo Garcia** with joint and co-authorship from Assemblymembers **Cecilia Aguiar-Curry, Chris Holden, Kevin McCarty, David Chiu, Susan Eggman, Marc Levine, Kevin Mullin, Anna Caballero, Mike Gipson, Reginald Jones-Sawyer, Jose Medina, Eloise Gómez Reyes, Blanca Rubio,** and **Jim Wood**.

AB 1665 authorizes additional collection of funds into California Advanced Services Fund (CASF), the state's primary resource to help close the Digital Divide. AB 1665 will:

- Retain the goal to fund infrastructure projects providing broadband access to no less than 98% of households, but extend the deadline to December 31, 2023.
- Establish a new Broadband Adoption Account to assist low-income Californian households in getting online.
- Require the CPUC to biennially report on CASF to the Legislature.
- Require the CPUC to identify priority unserved and underserved areas.
- Require the CPUC to consult regional consortia, stakeholders, and consumers about priority areas and cost-effective strategies to achieve the 98% goal.

The California Emerging Technology Fund and supporters of AB 1665 recommend that the Legislature authorize up to $500 million over 10 years to be collected into CASF to ensure:

- 98% broadband infrastructure deployment in each region.
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In the News

To Close the Digital Divide, Fund Community Organizations
March 9, 2017

Pew Internet/Broadband Fact Sheet
January 12, 2017

California and CA Fwd Should Double-Down on Smart Government
January 11, 2017

Students Get Tech Ready for 2017
January 5, 2017

Only 43 Percent of California's Rural Residents Have Broadband Internet Access
December 23, 2016

One Cure for California's Rural Health Care Needs
December 15, 2016

UC Riverside Center Aims to Boost Broadband Policy Research
December 14, 2016

Digital Democracy Success in Inyo County
November 30, 2016

Funding Opportunities

Frontier-CETF Broadband Adoption Grant Opportunity

Affordable Broadband

CETF Analysis as of March 2017

Everyone On

Internet Essentials (Comcast)

Access (AT&T)

Frontier

Resources

Broadband, Economic Development, and 5G

California Broadband Maps (by Senate and Assembly District)

Internet Connectivity and the Digital Divide in California Households, 2016

Opportunity for All? Technology and Learning in Lower-Income Families

90% adoption of home high-speed Internet service.

The Internet For All Now Act is the means to provide economic and social equity for Californians in the Digital Age. Although high-speed Internet access is essential for homework, job applications, workforce training, and civic engagement—30% of Californians do not have high-speed Internet and a computer at home. The CPUC estimates that only 43% of rural households have access to reliable broadband service, and the 2016 Field Poll finds that only 68% of low-income Californians have home broadband. The California Advanced Service Fund, capitalized by a few-cents-per-month telephone surcharge, is the only realistic mechanism in California available to support broadband deployment and adoption. Please visit the Internet For All Now website to learn more about this educational effort and take action.

California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley leaders show support for the Internet For All Now Act.

Forums on Agricultural Technology and 5G

On March 8, CETF held two policy forums in Sacramento. The first forum—moderated by CETF Board Director **Carol Whiteside** of California Strategies and **Robert Tse**, California State Broadband Coordinator for the U.S. Department of Agriculture—examined research and identified policies and strategies for broadband development in agriculture. In attendance were Assemblymember **Cecilia Aguiar-Curry** and California Secretary of Food and Agriculture **Karen Ross**. The second forum, moderated by CETF Board Director **Darrell Stewart** of Intel, examined the emerging technologies of 5G and fixed wireless and their potential to close the Digital Divide. Featured speakers included **David Witkowsk**i, Executive Director of Joint Silicon Valley's Wireless Communication Initiative, and **Alan Norman**, Public Policy Director of Facebook. Addressing the forum were **Amy Tong**, Director and State CIO of the California Department of Technology; Assemblymember **Eduardo Garcia**; and **Louis Fox**, President and CEO of CENIC. Click here to read CETF's backgrounder on broadband, economic development, and 5G.

2017 School2Home Leadership Academy

On February 8 and 9, 120 California school leaders met in Ontario for the 4th Annual School2Home Leadership Academy (see video here). The purpose of the Leadership Academy is to bring together teachers and administrators involved in CETF's School2Home program, which works to close the Achievement Gap and the Digital Divide by integrating the use of computing and broadband technologies into teaching and learning at low-performing middle schools throughout California. School2Home is active in 12 districts and 37 schools, involving 19,000 students and parents and 900 teachers. This year's featured speakers included: **Delaine Eastin**, former California Superintendent of Public Instruction and a School2Home Master Faculty Member since 2014; **Geoff Belleau** of the California Department of

Education's Division of Education Data Management; **Ruben Puentedura**, developer of the SAMR model for edtech learning; and **Dr. Carl Cohn**, chief executive director of the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence.

The Los Angeles Unified School District School2Home Leadership Teams comprise teachers and administrators from 10 middle schools.

During his School2Home Leadership Academy address, Dr. Cohn said: "When I come to a place like this and see what you're doing, I know the Governor would be incredibly excited, because you're the closest to the kids. If they're going to be rescued, they'll be rescued by you."

Dr. Carl Cohn, Chief Executive Director of the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence, speaking at the 2017 School2Home Leadership Academy.

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Creating Equity Through Broadband:
An Interview with
Assemblymember Kevin McCarty

Kevin McCarty was elected to the California State Assembly in 2014 to represent the 7th Assembly District, which includes Sacramento, West Sacramento, and parts of unincorporated Sacramento County. McCarty serves as Chair of the Assembly Budget Subcommittee on Education Finance. As Chair during the 2015-16 legislative session, McCarty negotiated annual statewide K-12 education spending of $88.3 billion and $30 billion to support California's Community College, CSU, and UC systems. He has served as a speaker at the School2Home Leadership Academy, and is a joint author of the Internet For All Now Act (AB 1665). CETF sat down with Assemblymember McCarty to learn more about his leadership to provide affordable and accessible Internet for all Californians.

Why is broadband important in your district?

Many communities in my district continue to suffer from the Digital Divide. The Digital Divide limits educational and employment opportunities and makes it difficult for new businesses to invest.

Why is broadband an economic development issue for your district and the state of California?

In my district, broadband Internet is helping government act more efficiently, saving taxpayer dollars, and is fostering a new generation of businesses that are creating jobs and improving our quality of life. As a state, California has always been at the global digital frontier. As technology becomes more mobile and wireless, broadband technology will need to keep up with the growing global trend toward fast, sustainable, and affordable wireless broadband access.

How have schools and libraries in your district benefited from broadband Internet access?

Schools and libraries in my district have been able to help students and the public connect with the world and for the world to connect with the good people of Sacramento. Broadband services in schools and libraries will continue to be essential to helping California remain academically and economically competitive around the world.

What would you like to see the Legislature do to improve broadband access and adoption?

The Legislature would be wise to modernize its broadband goals by prioritizing wireless broadband Internet access. The future is mobile and the future is wireless. California must work hard to make sure it remains globally competitive by offering affordable, accessible, and sustainable wireless broadband services and protecting net neutrality so that everyone can have equal access to the Internet. I am proud to be a joint author of

AB 1665, which will build upon the California Advanced Services Fund to help us ensure universal access to broadband internet for all Californians.

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The Digital Learning Revolution:
An Interview with Educator Lisa Richardson

Lisa Richardson is a social studies teacher at Serrano Middle School in the San Bernardino Unified School District, which has been a School2Home partner for six years. She became a teacher in 2002 after working in the corporate sector and finding it unfulfilling. CETF sat down with Lisa Richardson to learn about how the School2Home program has influenced Serrano Middle School and her students.

How has digital learning changed your teaching?

Since Serrano Middle School implemented 1:1 computer devices in every grade in 2016, many teachers have felt the technology is a challenge and a risk. Yet I've noticed a higher level of engagement in my classroom. I am a history teacher and, as a result of the computer use for research, I no longer have to give a straight lecture. I never have to have to explain concepts and dates over and over again to my students. I just facilitate a lesson, and let them look up the information on their own. I feel the students enjoy doing this more. They see their work and assignments as a kind of puzzle to figure out. In today's world, they have the world's libraries at their fingertips. They can Google the date and details of the Declaration of Independence in seconds. And then, that information becomes less important than what they think and feel about the Declaration of Independence. The teaching of history is changing dramatically due to digital learning. Students are learning to be more critical and analytical about information; how to decide whether it is authentic, valid, or factual; and what is the source, audience, etc. of the information.

Can you give a specific example of how student learning is changing?

Before the 1:1 program, students would write their notes from my lecture and use those notes to fill in a writing assignment. This year, the quality of the writing assignments from my 8th grade history class were different, even remarkable. I had them write about Andrew Jackson, an assignment which coincided with the inauguration of our new president. Donald Trump has compared himself to Andrew Jackson, so we made comparisons between Andrew Jackson's "spoils system" and Donald Trump's promise to "drain the swamp" of political corruption. The students compared Jackson's Indian removal policies and Trump's Muslim ban. And when they were writing, they brought together these facts and created a much higher level of historical analysis. Some students wrote that back in his day, Jackson was considered a great hero because of his American Indian policies; however, today our standards of morality and cultural awareness make his historical legacy much darker. Some of the students also wrote that just as history has made Jackson a villain, our current president may eventually be viewed just as negatively.

How will your teaching continue to change as a result of Internet access and digital learning?

I am taking every lesson plan and applying the SAMR model to it. The SAMR model—short for the Substitution Augmentation Modification Redefinition Model—makes me look harder at how computer technology impacts students learning. I've also realized other things due to digital learning. In 8th grade, attention spans are not as long as adults. You have to chunk everything to keep students' attention focused and create packets of learning that connect together. I've come to understand you can do that better with technology. You can start with a short video and then you can take that into a class discussion. And maybe from there, you can ask the students to take notes. And then you can ask them to create a visual slide show with a few captions and sentences. So they're augmenting their note taking and learning from it.

What are some of the concerns teachers have about the 1:1 programs?

Many of the teachers at my site and other sites are concerned that the kids will break the devices or won't bring them to school charged. You know, you can die on the table when you have surgery, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't have surgery. So yes, we're going to have some stuff break and, yes, the devices are sometimes going to arrive uncharged. We're going to deal with that when it happens, and it's going to be OK, because this is how we are going to create a generation of kids who are ready to lead us into the future. I believe the 1:1 program is giving my students the ability to think at higher levels and make smarter connections.

What kind of training do you and your colleagues need now that technology is rapidly changing education?

We need more access to apps that are free or low cost. The price of many great educational applications is just too high for most schools. Also, a lot of educators who are older, in their forties and fifties, are not as tech savvy as the incoming teachers in their twenties and thirties. We need to have more training in digital education for them. And we need the government to understand that technology has got to be in the classroom and they have to fund it. So we need funding, training, and more applications that are not extremely costly.

Anything else you want to say about the changes brought on by digital literacy programs like School2Home?

I'm just really glad it happened. I was becoming bored from teaching the same subject. I would give the same lesson over and over. Now, I can't wait to go to school. I can't wait to administer a lesson. I can't wait to see what happens. It has made me love teaching.

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Arming Students with Digital Tools:
An Interview with Educator Leo Gonzalez

In 2009, School2Home implemented its first program at Stevenson Middle School, with Leo Gonzalez at the helm. Gonzalez is a longtime educator in the Los Angeles Unified School District. He started his career as a primary center and adult education teacher's assistant and has served as a middle school English teacher, dean of students, and assistant principal at Roosevelt High School. Since becoming principal of Stevenson Middle School in 2008, he has focused on providing students a college and career focus. He likes to tell students, "You are not measured by your success, but by the obstacles you overcome." CETF sat down with Gonzalez at the 2017 School2Home Leadership Academy to learn his views on 1:1 programs, educational technology, and the larger trends in California public education.

Why did you decide to work with School2Home and bring Chromebooks into Stevenson Middle School?

In 2009, Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa led an initiative for 10 under-performing LAUSD schools and brought aboard Sunne McPeak of the California Emerging Technology Fund. They gave a presentation about the need to place computing devices in schools. At that time, Stevenson was considered one of the top technology schools. This meant that we had plenty of technology—but not that the teachers were using the technology every day with their students. The reason I took on the School2Home program was because it provided our families and students a device that they could use any time to advance their knowledge. My view as a principal was: Who wouldn't want a program that could help students improve academically?

Was implementation of School2Home challenging?

Seven years ago, we distributed 2,300 devices in the first phase—to students in 6th through 8th grades—so it was quite a logistical task. There were 6 hours of parent training required for families to take home a device. There were also 24 hours of teacher training. But everybody bought in; 100 percent of our teachers were trained, and we had 99 percent of parents trained as well. This year, we only have 20 parents not trained, because they didn't want the devices at home or for some other reason. Currently, we have to set aside teacher release time to review data and also to continue to contact families on children's progress. This in itself is a financial commitment to the school for teacher prep and release time to sustain the program. Another challenge is not just how to get the technology into the hands of students—it's how to make sure the child is using the technology correctly. But Stevenson students are definitely excited to have home computers, and I would say 90 percent of them take their utilization very seriously.

When, if ever, will School2Home become unnecessary? In other words, are we getting to a point where there are few families who don't have computing devices and broadband at home?

No, we are far from that point. Home broadband and computing devices are expensive and out of the reach of many California families. In addition, in California, as [former California Superintendent of Public Instruction] Delaine Eastin pointed out at the 2017 School2Home Leadership Academy, we rank low in terms of per pupil spending. Stevenson was actually one of the first schools that was per pupil funded using local control formula funding, which has allowed us to use extra money to buy or maintain devices. There's just a lot of need for funding in technology, but that's not going to happen until there's an investment in teachers and in reduction of class sizes. So we need programs like School2Home to fill the gap, especially when standardized tests are being conducted online.

Do you worry that computers will replace teachers?

Computers are never going to replace teachers; however, teachers need to learn how best to implement computers in the classroom. We want our

students to be career ready—and that will require them having technology and computing skills. That's why at Stevenson we provide coding opportunities for kids. These technology electives give our students both the opportunity to improve their academic growth and have fun. But these kinds of technology offerings require partnerships—with colleges, nonprofits, and funders. As instructional leaders, we need to go outside the district to provide our students additional resources.

How has your role as principal changed due to programs like School2Home?

Before the technological shift in education, principals were seen as operational leaders. We fixed things, dealt with emergencies, managed people. Now, we are also educational resource and instructional leaders who need to think about what opportunities—from School2Home's provision of home laptops to City National Bank's provision of financial literacy—to make available to our students. Principals now have to bring in multiple components to help schools move forward and give students additional opportunities.

What would you say to educators in California considering School2Home?

I would say: look at the data. You need sufficient data and analysis to convince teachers that this initiative is necessary to incorporate into their teaching, that it will improve classroom dynamics, and will result in better student performance assessments. My experience with School2Home is that the program is helping students achieve higher academic scores.

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